(a) whether it is a fact that Government have plans to promote Wagah Border and Punjab as the new tourist destinations; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Development and promotion of tourism is undertaken primarily by the State Governments/UT Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations for tourism-related projects which are identified in consultation and interaction with them under scheme for Integrated Development of Tourist Circuits, Product/Infrastructure Development of Destinations and Assistance to Large Revenue Generating Projects. No proposal has been received from the Government of Punjab to promote Wagah Border as the new tourist destination.

Identification of new places of tourist interest

2919. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether some fresh initiatives have been taken to identify new places of tourist interest in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and their present status;

(c) whether any proposal has been formulated to develop and/or upgrade the 'Dandi March' route from Dandi Pul, where the historic 'March' began 75 years ago right upto Dandi in South Gujarat, which does not have even a memorial enroute to commemorate the non-violent protest event, which shook the British Empire; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and its present status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Identification of new tourist places/ spots is a continuous process. Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the State Governments identifies such places of tourist interest and based on project proposals from the States offers financial assistance for development of their infrastructure.

(c) and (d) No such proposal has been received from the State Government.

Projects of Madhya Pradesh under Circuit Development Plan

†2920. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether several projects of Madhya Pradesh under Circuit Development Plan are pending for the approval of Central Government;

(b) if so, the latest position thereof, project-wise; and

(c) by when, these projects are likely to get approval of Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides Central financial assistance on the basis of project proposals prioritized every year in consultation with the State Governments/ UT Administrations including the State of Madhya Pradesh. The project proposals received, complete in all respects, are processed on *inter-se*-priority basis and funds are released, subject to availability under the respective head. Project proposals which are not complete as per guidelines are not taken up for consideration.

(c) Does not arise.

Promotion of Rural Tourism

2921. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU. Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated/propose to formulate a policy for promoting "Rural Tourism" in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) The creation of infrastructure in Rural

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.